

*Hello and welcome to COM-Versations, your School of Communication podcast. Here in the School of COM, we know how to make Fell Hall fun. Tune in often to hear the latest COM-versations among faculty, staff, and students. After all, we're the best in the Midwest for a reason. I'm Julie Navickas and today I'm joined by my co-host Dr. Lance Lippert, professor of communication studies, and we are ready to kick off season two of our podcast.*

LL: Wow.

JN: Yeah!

LL: It's a cliché, but time does fly.

JN: It does.

LL: And it crashes oftentimes. But I just came, flew into town and my arm's tired. That...fun in Fell for the fall.

JN: Fun in Fell for the...no, I messed it up.

LL: I don't know, what is it, how do you say it? The funniest place in...we have fun in Fell.

JN: We do. We have fun in Fell Hall.

LL: And we're getting ready for the fall semester.

JN: We are, yes.

LL: Wow, you know it's just amazing. Yeah, we're into classes and...way cool.

JN: I know! It's nice to be back, though.

LL: Yeah. Well, you've worked all summer, I mean.

JN: I, yeah, I did, I did.

LL: I worked a lot this summer. We got to do a lot of traveling and a lot of...I taught a class and some work and concerts, fishing, my son got married and—

JN: That's right.

LL: —and he's still married, so that's good.

JN: Well, that, that's a good thing!

LL: Three and a half months later.

JN: Three and a half months in. I mean you know that's a milestone.

LL: It is, and you have to, he's still kind of...ah, he's not coming out and asking for money but he's like, *Well this broke, dad what do you think? Good luck, son!* Growing up's tough, so. It should be a great semester hopefully we'll capture some of that on the podcast and at ISU, all

kinds of things, so. You mentioned this is our second season, we had some good feedback on the first season in spite of me, but.

JN: You're the star of the show, Lance, come on.

LL: You are, and we have guests coming in the next, this series, right? So, who do we have different like what, who will we be talking to, what kind of person?

JN: Yeah, good question. So, our season, our first season was mostly focused on just bringing in some different faculty, learning their story, what their role is here, but I thought for season two we would transition and learn a little bit about what students can get involved in to be successful during their time here. So, we've got a great lineup of student organizations and different representatives for different opportunities to enhance your success before graduating but we've got a full lineup.

LL: No that's, and by popular demand I'm not sure if I can find a...I haven't talked to Reggie yet, but we'll come up with a Reggie, Reggie Redbird joke. Actually, it's interesting I couldn't find Reggie, he was sitting on top of the building the other day. Reggie was on top of the building.

JN: Why?

LL: Well, Fell Hall needs its roof fixed for one and two, Reggie heard there were drinks on the house, so he...

JN: Drinks on the Hall.

LL: Yeah, drinks on the Hall. Jesse Fell serves a good drink. Here's a good cocktail. Hey, by the way, okay so what I might do this this go around is share some interesting facts about Illinois State.

JN: Oh, I like that idea.

LL: And you have to see if they're correct or not or fill in the blank, okay? So, I got a couple, you want me to do that?

JN: Alright, let's play.

LL: *Duh, duh, duh, duhhh!* Interesting facts about Illinois State. Okay, true or false: Jesse Fell's mother's name was Rebecca.

JN: My gut says that that's true.

LL: Yes, it is, and where was Jesse Fell born?

JN: Well, I wanna say Normal, Illinois but you're looking at me as though that's incorrect.

LL: Pennsylvania.

JN: Really?

LL: Yeah.

JN: What a fun fact!

LL: Yeah. True or false: Jesse Fell was the first lawyer of Bloomington.

JN: True.

LL: Yeah! He also was a lawyer.

JN: Yes.

LL: And he was the first Bloomington lawyer.

JN: Okay.

LL: And Abe, his buddy, President Lincoln was the first lawyer of Normal, so. A normal school.

JN: I knew there was a connection there with President Lincoln, but.

LL: See, aren't these interesting? It's just...

JN: Oh, you're full of the fun facts!

LL: Oh, I'm full of it, yes, I am. But so, we'll try to do something interesting. I'll see how good you are, true or false or you have to pick the correct statement.

JN: Oh okay, I'll have to study.

LL: They're gonna be so obscure it doesn't matter.

JN: It doesn't matter, you won't be prepared anyway.

LL: You know I was looking...me probably not, you maybe. There's gonna be some...I'll try to make em pretty obvious, but. He moved here, Jesse Fell of course. Our building was named after him and one of the, he founded the university, but when he came here, he came...they suggested he come to Bloomington which had under 1000 people. Some of this information is from the McLean County History Museum's website and. But just an interesting story about how he got here, and a Quaker from Pennsylvania moved here, and what he did for this area was incredible and the mark that he left, but the students, I think we need to be aware of history. Whatever it is, good or bad so we don't repeat it or can embrace it.

JN: Learn from it.

LL: We can and that's, I guess a bigger conversation about our society today, but. Anyway, some neat stuff happened here and it's, I always am impressed I'd like to see where President Lincoln's law office was. You know that's right across from the enforcement center but right around the corner from Rosie's. Have you noticed all the cool places to eat around here?

JN: Oh, tons of options. What's your favorite?

LL: Boy, I don't know. Everything.

JN: All of it.

LL: Oh, so another pizza place moved in. We've got two pizza places now in Uptown Normal and we're getting an Italian place.

JN: Really?

LL: What's it called...Leon, that's over—

JN: Oh!

LL: —One on Hershey and then there's gonna be one right on the circle.

JN: That's not Italian.

LL: Oh, not Italian, what did I say, Mexican. Yeah, well I like Italian.

JN: You're gonna be disappointed if you're ever wanting some spaghetti.

LL: I know, *I want some spaghetti!* But some great, and Uptown Normal is changing and Payaa Pizza and then the fire pizza's down the...I don't know what my favorite is, I like, my favorite Mexican is El Porton down by West.

JN: Oh, that is good.

LL: But there's some good places. What's your favorite?

JN: That's a hard one. I really like The Rock. So good, walk right over there, it's fast, it's easy. Delicious.

LL: Some of the best meat. I'm gonna say, is it gyro or gyro, what is it?

JN: I would only expect you to call it a gyro.

LL: *I'm from western Kansas, you got some of that gyro meat?* But I love there, no the Mediterranean stuff is great. Those are some fun places in a lot of different varieties, but it starts to add up if you eat out all the time.

JN: Oh, without a doubt, yes.

LL: Still have our farmer's market in Bloomington that'll go through the fall, and let's see. Just recently we had our Sweet Corn Circus Festival. Did you get to that?

JN: Yeah, we did! We were out there on Saturday. Huge turnout, huge turnout.

LL: Fun? Tremendous.

JN: Yes.

LL: Why not take advantage of the circus tradition and the corn. It's been a number of things, it used to be the tomato pageant and over the years you go back far enough and.

JN: Tomato pageant.

LL: Yeah, tomato. Go figure and...but there's more coming up. So, you, okay here's another trivia question: how many heads of corn did they sell this week? And they ran out.

JN: I have...how do I even guess that?

LL: Over or under one? Over under 10. Do you think it's over 10,000?

JN: Yeah, I do, yeah.

LL: Yeah, 30,000.

JN: Wow!

LL: Yeah.

JN: How do you know that? You're just making it up.

LL: No, I am that's random. No, I am, I heard a, I was listening to a radio show this morning. The people that ran it, the city and the, I forgot what the man's title is, but he was on AM radio.

JN: Oh, interesting.

LL: And talking to somebody, so that's a lot. And did you see some circus performances?

JN: We caught a couple circus performers, but my kids absolutely loved the pro wrestlers that were here. Talk about a show, that was funny.

LL: How tremendous. Did they do some of that when they got home?

JN: Yeah, I think their large reaction was looking at me going, *Isn't somebody going to stop them from fighting?* Cause it goes against everything we've ever taught them.

LL: Okay, here's a, we'll get on to the business here in just a second.

JN: Yes.

LL: Here's your task for next week.

JN: Okay.

LL: Find out which one of our faculty used to wrestle professionally.

JN: I already know. I already know. It's Dr. John Hooker.

LL: Okay.

JN: I know.

LL: You knew that.

JN: I just happened to know that.

LL: Is he coming in at all?

JN: We should get him in.

LL: Yeah, talk about that.

JN: Just to hear about that. I'm sure he'd be thrilled.

LL: He's one of the co-directors of the basic course. Anyway, so we have people with all kinds of backgrounds.

JN: Without a doubt, yeah. Very diverse.

LL: One of these days we'll talk about the time I spent in prison in Turkey. Turkish prisons are just crazy.

JN: I look forward to that.

LL: Okay, so we've got people coming in and a lot of things are happening in the School.

JN: Yeah, lot of changes. Lot of changes, all good things but yeah, this entire season is gonna be really focused on introducing to our current students or even prospective Redbirds all the great ways to get involved, how to enhance your resume, make friends, just get a feel for how to stay connected to the School of Communication.

LL: And hopefully some of our alumni will be able to check in on this podcast and we'll include as many alum as we can.

JN: Yeah.

LL: You mentioned also which is some other changes just quickly, do you mind, we have an interim director.

JN: We do.

LL: Dr. Aimee Miller-Ott. Dr Hunt stepped down as director, still gonna be on faculty, but I think it's a 10-year rule. They say after 10 years you're getting a little bit fried.

JN: Gotta be done.

LL: I don't know, I guess, and let's see what else is happening. We have a new program starting?

JN: We sure do, yes. So, our long-standing COM Week tradition, for a variety of reasons, it wasn't sustainable anymore, kind of identified some problems and we took a long hard look at what professional development looks like in the School of Communication and decided it needed an overhaul. So, we are introducing the Career COM-petency Program, which is entirely

designed to help students with professional development opportunities. They'll still be able to connect with alums of our program, hear about different workshops, participate, do small assignments to help really just to enhance their competency with what communication has to offer for their degree.

LL: And it's C, capital C, capital O, capital M, hyphen...petency.

JN: Yes.

LL: Well, that's easy to say, but that's so cool. COM-petency. And it's about professional development and this is something we've talked about for a while.

JN: Oh, yeah, you...

LL: And it'll go along with our entry level COM 100, which talks about becoming a student and we start that career and it's integrated through our curriculum in multiple ways, and we have multiple classes. So, it's a matter of, it's not our job to get students a job but it's our job to make sure they're prepared as much as we can and to show employers that they bring this grounded process of critical thinking and communicating.

JN: Without a doubt.

LL: Yeah.

JN: Yeah, there's some values, right that we share in the School of Communication and so each of our competency modules and workshops, they're all gonna be focused on something different, but if students complete it, I mean they will graduate as well-rounded, very marketable candidates for positions.

LL: And it's interesting, the landscape is changing so rapidly now even, we talked about how COVID changed it. Post COVID I mean, it's interesting. The number of unemployment, employed people have gone down, the number of people in their jobs is going up. And I think it's an interesting time, although they're saying employees or employers are saying we're going to now have a larger job participant pool but so we can pay you less and ask more, and I don't know if that cuts across all occupations.

JN: All industries, yeah.

LL: But there's so much happening. Interesting times...especially with artificial intelligence, AI and.

JN: No that's wild.

LL: It is wild, and I talked to a number of folks, and they want the students to be able to know that. I don't, I talked to a number of employers and organizations they already are implementing that in their workplace.

JN: Really? It seems so new.

LL: From internal com and stuff like that. Memos or recap of meetings. And I think it's been around longer in organizations than we might know.

JN: That's true.

LL: But what's it gonna do to a job I don't...I think it's gonna create new jobs and if it's used in a way that is positive but.

JN: Right.

LL: Everybody looks to find ways to take advantage of it, so. The landscape's just changing, the whole world for jobs and so we want to try to get people in that mindset of not just studying for one particular job or place, but how to go about finding that and establishing a career and take advantage of what, what's best for you and get that trajectory going and make it sustainable, then.

JN: Without a doubt, yeah.

LL: I teach a capstone class, senior capstone in communication studies, and some of them have jobs already. A couple of them, not a lot.

JN: That's wonderful, though!

LL: Which it is, but it's like, it's like, how'd you get that? *Well uncle Bobby—*

JN: It's not what you know, it's who you know. We've all heard it.

LL: It is, and I say, *Well then what's next?* You know? So how will you move in internally in the family, business or know somebody. So, it is who you know, and we've had guest speakers, alums that have come in and have said, coaches that have said, job coaches, career coaches that have said, *The people you need to network with, you know.*

JN: That's very true.

LL: And take advantage of that, so I'm excited about this series. We feel bad, I mean COM Week was terrific, but we're gonna make this more open to people, more people over a period of time. And hopefully we'll end up with however we capture it, it'll be a certificate or something that'll say they can put on their transcript when they leave.

JN: Oh yeah, absolutely. And, you know that was the idea behind this is you know we have so many incredible alums who are gonna want to come back and connect and network with students, but trying to condense it into one week? It just wasn't working anymore. We didn't have the classroom spaces for it, students couldn't get out of classes, so if we're spreading this out, we have the entire academic year to help students connect and meet with alums, networking opportunities and gain some really cool skills, you know in the interim. I think it's



gonna be a really good shift and I'm excited to see how it plays out. I think I have at least 20 students who have already participated and signed up and honestly, some of them have already completed some of the assignments, so. It's very easy to do and if you complete all the competencies at graduation, we'll give them a nice School of Communication branded cord.

LL: Do I get one...no, never mind.

JN: You can have one, yeah. I'll make you a special one.

LL: Woo, thank you! Says *kick me*, with a sign that says *kick me* on the back. But then they also...we're gonna help them find a way to put this on their resume as well.

JN: Oh, yeah!

LL: Not the transcript, but the resume.

JN: Absolutely. We'll offer a certificate, and we'll honor everybody at the Awards and Scholarship Luncheon in the spring, so everyone's welcome to join.

LL: Do you realize what you're in for, how busy you're gonna be?

JN: Ah yeah, yeah. I have a great team though.

LL: You do.

JN: Wonderful interns, great supportive staff here. That's what we do in the School of Com is, we are a team.

LL: Yeah, and a community too, and I think that's important, so. I'm excited about this, thank you for letting me be a part of the podcast. It is what it is and so we'll...I'll come in and say some goofy stuff, I'm just the sidekick, I'm like on the couch and oh and I laugh at her jokes and so.

JN: You're more than that, Lance, come on.

LL: No, but I'm saying it's a privilege to be here to say good words about our program and maybe we'll get a couple of alums on too, and I think we have such great alumni base and that's the other thing, how many alumni do we have in School of Com—

JN: I don't even know.

LL: —or even the university, there's a ton of them out there.

JN: Yeah.

LL: We'll look into that.

JN: That's interesting. That would be a nice trivia question.

LL: Sure, you knew the pro wrestling thing but not the, okay whatever.

JN: Not the important stuff.

LL: Yeah, for sure.

JN: Alright, I will mark that down. That's my homework. I will do some research and find that out.

LL: Check, have your team do that.

JN: Yes.

LL: So, our next podcast coming up we'll be talking with someone?

JN: Yes, we have Steve Suess who is going to be joining us and talk about our award-winning student run radio station, WZND.

LL: One of the top college radio stations in the district.

JN: Like the top.

LL: It is the top, there's only a handful of over the air stations that, they still stream, but they are also over the air and there's only a handful of those, it's a very rare thing, and it was quite a journey to get that over the air license and certification so it's interesting so I'd love to hear what Steve has to say.

JN: I'm looking forward to it. He's a fun guy and he's got a wealth of knowledge.

LL: Did you just call him a mushroom?

JN: No.

LL: A fungi.

JN: A fungi...Lance.

LL: And you can only get better from here from now on.

JN: Do they just come to you as you hear things?

LL: I'm not that clever. John Baldwin's clever.

JN: Yeah, he's pretty good with the puns, yeah.

LL: So, but anyway I'm looking forward to this season.

JN: Me too.

LL: And hopefully if anybody has any ideas or input or feedback, we'd love that too.

JN: Oh yeah always welcome comments, suggestions. I think we can improve, so.

LL: Excellent, thank you.

JN: Very good.

LL: I'll look forward to it.

JN: Thank you.

LL: And here we go again!

JN: Here we go again!

LL: See you at homecoming.

JN: Alright. Season two.